

## **HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MINUTES**

The Human Rights Commission met on Tuesday, October 15, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose Room at the Kandiyohi County Historical Society.

Members present were: Shelly Huseby, Shawn Mueske, Vicki Davis, Barbara Little, Jill Benson, Marlin Breems, Richard Engan, John Salgado Maldonado, Ben Larson and Lilbon Clark.

### Item No. 1      Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Shelly Huseby at 5:00 p.m.

### Item No. 2      Approve Minutes of Meeting

Chair Huseby presented the minutes of the August 20, 2019 meeting for discussion. Commission Member Benson moved to approve the Human Rights Commission minutes of August 20, 2019 and Commission Member Larson seconded the motion, which carried.

### Item No. 3      Public Comment

Kay Slama was present and wished to speak later in the meeting.

### Item No. 4      GARE Update:

Chair Huseby informed the group that the Government Alliance of Racial Equity (GARE) has held their last regional session and questioned the members on next steps are and moving this work forward. She and Sarah Swedberg, City Planner, plan to reconvene with the original group and loop in the schools (Willmar Public and Ridgewater) to keep the work going. This was spurred by a training session through the League of MN Cities with City staff where afterward some of the participants expressed interest in moving forward what they had learned. They are the people who are interfacing with the population of our city every day and having interactions with our diverse population.

### Item No. 5      Ben Larson and Kay Slama Discussion Items:

Commissioner Larson informed the Commission that in his free time he researches “hate groups” and there was a Muslim hate group that came to Willmar in the past called Truth and Love that spoke anti-muslimism at a church. He looked on their website and found an interfaith document that Steve Ahmann had signed as a Kandiyohi County Commissioner. The Commission discussed the issue and it was their consensus Chair Huseby contact Kandiyohi County Administrator Larry Kleindl to ensure they are aware of the signature on this document and inquire if the county has any form of governance for commissioner’s behavior. Chair Huseby will keep the members informed of the outcome. It was noted the voters have the power and they need to take the lead.

Kay Slama, a member of the Interfaith Network but representing herself as a citizen of Kandiyohi County, was present to bring forth the possibility of forming a Kandiyohi County Human Rights Commission or a joint commission and work together on issues. She spoke with County Commissioner Imdieke and he was very interested. The Commission discussed the jurisdiction noting that each would be a separate entity but could jointly discuss items. Ms. Slama thanked the commission for discussing the formulation of a county human rights commission.

Chair Huseby touched on the racial equity work and moving it forward in the City. One example is the complaint policy issue which is currently a reactive complaint i.e. parking, garbage, mowing, sidewalk snow removal and reviewing that policy. Are there people who know they are in violation of the city ordinances. How do we work with new citizens in Willmar who do not know this is their responsibility? Is there a way to communicate to these individuals? Commissioner Mueske mentioned he thought the City Planner, Sarah Swedburg, had developed a program containing many of these policies. He will try to obtain the policies for the next meeting and invite Sarah.

Item No. 6      Other Business

Chair Huseby was approached by the Administrator of Bethesda Nursing asking if the Commission could recommend someone to come and speak to residents about cultural education. She mentioned a lot of the residents at Bethesda are resistant if staff they see are from other cultures. This in turn is causing some staff retention issues. Commissioner Larson offered to email Chair Huseby some possible contacts.

The next meeting date of the Commission will be Tuesday, November 19, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janell Sommers  
Administrative Assistant